

Woodstock Surgery

Oxfordshire County Council's public health team is offering the following advice:

- Stay out of the heat and direct sunlight as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of cool fluids and avoid alcohol and caffeine and hot drinks.
- Keep windows that are exposed to the sun closed during the day, and open windows at night when the temperature has dropped. Use locks on open windows as children may fall out if they are able to climb on furniture to reach the window, or if they are jumping or playing on a bed near an open window.
- Wear UV sunglasses, preferably wraparound, to reduce UV exposure to the eyes, walk in the shade, apply sunscreen of at least SPF15 with UVA protection, wear a hat and light scarf. Wear light, loose-fitting cotton clothes. This should minimise the risk of sunburn.
- Avoid physical exertion.
- Drink plenty of cold drinks.
- If you have a health problem, keep medicines below 25 °C or in the refrigerator.
- Look out for others especially vulnerable groups such as the older people, young children and babies and those with serious illnesses.
- Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children or animals.
- Danger symptoms to watch out for in hot weather include:
 - feeling faint and dizzy
 - short of breath
 - vomiting
 - increasing confusion
- Take immediate action if danger symptoms of heatstroke are present:
 - Take action to cool down as soon as possible
 - Seek further advice from NHS 111, a doctor, or ring 999 if a person has collapsed
- Those with heart, respiratory and serious health problems are more at risk and the heat can make these conditions worse. Babies and young children are also especially at risk especially within when they are in pushchairs or car seats.
- Many prescription medicines can reduce your tolerance of heat. You should keep taking your medicine but take extra care to keep cool. If in doubt contact your GP.
- Keep an eye on isolated or elderly neighbours, ill or very young people and make sure they are able to keep cool.

Remember that it can get uncomfortably hot indoors too. Try to keep your bedroom and living space cool, by closing the curtains on windows that receive the sun and opening your windows at cooler times of the day and overnight when safe to do so. Turn off non-essential lights and electrical items as these generate heat.

Health and social care workers in the community, hospitals and care homes are advised to regularly check on vulnerable patients, share sun safety messages, make sure room temperatures are set below 26 °C, ensure patients have access to cold water and ice and that medicines are stored in a cool place.

Stephen Pinel of Oxfordshire County Council's public health teams said: "While hot weather is enjoyable for most people and uncomfortable for some, sadly experience tells us that exposure to excessive heat can kill, with most cases of illness and death caused by heart and lung disease. Because we are not used to these very hot temperatures in England, local plans are in place to reduce the impact of harm from very hot weather.

Heat can be harmful to your health. In August 2003, there were over 2,000 excess deaths during one ten-day heatwave in the UK.